



13 January 2023

## A message from Julia Paoli, Director & Curator at Mercer Union

After five years—more than 11 commissions and 19 exhibitions—it is with mixed emotions that I write to share the news that I will be leaving my role at Mercer Union to pursue an exciting new chapter as Executive Director of The Vega Foundation. Founded by Elisa Nuyten, the foundation is dedicated to supporting and promoting artists through the production and acquisition of new moving image works and to facilitate their presentation through institutional collaborations.

I'm proud of what we have accomplished together during my tenure as Director & Curator at Mercer Union. We've been able to deliver an ambitious curatorial program while placing the organization's operations and finances on solid footing. As a curator, the centre's mission has allowed me to facilitate a space for artists to take risks with their work and the privilege to realize projects with artists that I deeply admire. Some of our most important accomplishments have been formalizing our commissioning program, *Artist First*, defining a new strategic plan with a clear purpose and mission for the organization, working closely with artists to develop meaningful exhibitions, and emerging from the challenges of the pandemic in good financial health.

It has been an immense privilege to work with an exceptional team of creative and talented colleagues and a group of dedicated board members whose passion and engagement fortify what makes Mercer Union a beloved organization. Together we have set a clear path for new success, to continue building on Mercer Union's reputation as a leading artist-run centre. I will always hold dear the important relationships developed along the way with artists, colleagues, philanthropists, and community partners. I am looking forward to witnessing the next chapter of this unparalleled organization.

The Board of Directors will begin the search for new leadership through a formal process and will share news of their work in the coming weeks and months.

Thank you for investing deeply in an institution that means so much to our community. None of our work would be possible without the support and engagement of our generous partners whose passion make this institution unique in Canada's contemporary arts landscape.

I look forward to connecting with you at the gallery for our next milestone exhibition: *Tassili*, a highly anticipated commission by artist Lydia Ourahmane.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Julia Paoli". The script is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial 'J'.

Julia Paoli  
Director & Curator